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REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claim 1, 12 and 13 have been revised. Support for the revisions can be found at, e.g., page 4, lines 5-20, page 6, lines 18-25 and page 13, lines 15-23 of the specification, among other places. Claims 1-18 remain pending in the application. Claims 12-18 have been withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 5-11 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al. (US Patent No. 6,291,054) in view of Anderson et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0082524). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 requires that a fluororesin coating layer cover particulate matter. Claim 1 further requires at least some of the particulate matter be formed in surface protrusion-shaped smooth projections, so that frictional resistance to a resin tube that comes into contact with the projections is reduced. The present arrangement allows a medical guide wire to have low surface frictional resistance while maintaining a relatively high strength (see, e.g., page 2, lines 14-17 of the specification, among other places).

Thomas et al. fail to teach or suggest that a fluororesin coating layer covers particulate matter, as required by claim 1. Instead, Thomas et al. merely discuss a substrate 10 that is coated with a fluoropolymer coating containing filler particles 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, where particle 17 breaks through the coating surface to provide abrasion resistance to the fluoropolymer coating (see Thomas et al., Abstract, col. 3, lines 14-35 and Fig. 1). Nor do Thomas et al. teach or suggest that at least some of the particulate matter is formed in surface protrusion-shaped smooth projections, so that frictional resistance for a resin tube that comes into contact with the projections is reduced. On the contrary, the focus of the particles in Thomas et al. is to use the particles to reduce the no-stick and low friction properties in the fluoropolymer coating and to provide abrasion resistance to the coating (see Thomas et al., Abstract, col. 3, lines 14-35).

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Anderson et al. do not remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al. Anderson et al. merely discuss a guidewire that has a flexible coil having a polymer coating at its tapered distal portion and are silent as to a fluororesin coating layer that covers particulate matter, much less some of the particulate matter that is formed in surface protrusion-shaped smooth projections, as required by claim 1.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Thomas et al. in view of Anderson et al. Claims 2 and 5-11 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1 and need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

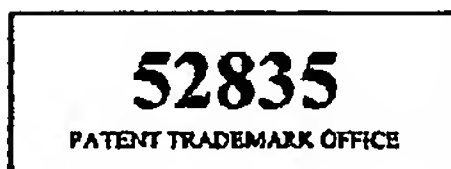
Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al. in view of Anderson et al., and further in view of Mori et al. (US Application Publication No. 2002/0172829). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1 and are patentable over Thomas et al. in view of Anderson et al., and further in view of Mori et al. for at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claims 1-2 and 5-11. Mori et al. do not remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al. and Anderson et al. Mori et al. merely discuss a non-fluorine-containing polymer layer 4 that contains particulates 1, where some of the particulates 1 protrude out of the non-fluorine-containing polymer layer 4 (see Mori et al., Fig. 3 and paragraph [0099]). Mori et al. provides no teachings or suggestions of a fluororesin coating layer that covers particulate matter, much less some of the particulate matter that is formed in surface protrusion-shaped smooth projections.

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In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612) 455-3804.

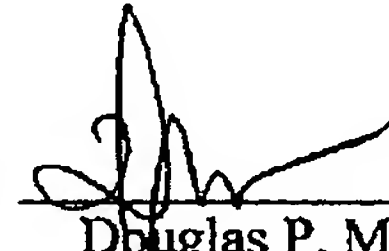
Respectfully submitted,

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